

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Status of Claims:

Claims 1, 2, 4-7 and 9-16 are currently being canceled.

Claims 3, 8 and 17 are currently being amended.

Claims 23-25 are currently being added.

This amendment adds, amends and cancels claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 3, 8 and 17-25 are now pending in this application.

Indication of Allowable Subject Matter:

Applicant appreciates the indication of allowable subject matter made in the Office Action with respect to claims 3, 8 and 17-22. By way of this amendment and reply, claims 3, 8 and 17 have each been placed in independent form to include the features of their respective base claim and any intervening claims. Therefore, claims 3, 8 and 17-22 (claims 18-22 depend from claim 17) are now in allowable form.

Claim Rejections – Prior Art:

In the Office Action, claims 1-2, 4-6 and 9-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,609,162 to Shimizu et al.; and claims 7 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shimizu et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,771,386 to Kato. Due to the cancellation of claims 1-2, 4-7 and 9-16, these rejections are now moot.

New Claims 23-25:

New claims 23-25 have been added to recite the invention from a different perspective. In particular, the present invention according to new claims 23-25 manages a plurality of input devices that are connected to a network through a communication medium. Relations between masters and slaves are determined with respect to the input devices. A master device controls a slave device, and the slave device can change some of its control parameters. An output medium and output form can be designated for each of the slave devices. With these features, the present invention according to new claims 23-25 provides environments under which various kinds of input documents can be input and output to suitable mediums.

None of the references cited against the claims under rejection discloses or suggests the features described above, whereby those features are exemplified by the first through fourth receiving means, the first and second transferring means, the changing means, the updating means, the processing means, the first and second notifying means, the memory means, and the printing means, as recited in new claims 23-25.

Accordingly, new claims 23-25 are believed to be in allowable form.

Conclusion:

Accordingly, Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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